

Critical Economic Questions Regarding the WOPR

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Have you conducted research on the possible impacts that the Western Oregon Plan Revision (WOPR) will have on individual Oregon residents and the economic future of non-timber businesses in Oregon communities?

I would appreciate any answers you can provide in the following questions to help me address my concerns. Please provide references to all your sources.

Question about impacts on property value

How will the WOPR impact the value of Oregon property in the O&C corridor?

I am concerned that the WOPR will make my property investments more difficult to market for the highest dollar value.

I have heard estimates that the increased logging proposed in the WOPR will save me a few hundred dollars each year in property tax but I am concerned that this savings will come at the price of tens of thousands of dollars in lost property value. Have you done any research that explains the potential loss of property value and property marketability the WOPR might inflict on land owners in the O&C corridor? What research have you done to clarify how the loss in property value will be off-set by a higher or equal value in the reduction of property taxes?

Question about impacts to tourism dependent businesses

How will the WOPR impact the economic viability, sustainability, and future of tourism dependent businesses in the O&C corridor?

The reason for my concern is the severity of the impacts the logging in Alternative 2 will have on visual resources, which the BLM describes in their visual resource index (VRI) as visually obvious and distracting to the casual observer.

Research on tourism indicates the majority of Americans travel to see scenery while other studies indicate the majority of travelers choose destinations where the community has preserved is natural and cultural heritage. How are we supposed to market ourselves in a landscape of clear-cut logging? Have you done any research on marketing strategies for O&C communities who must readjust their current economic planning to survive under the force of these impacts?

I am also concerned about the perception that the traveling public will have when they see clear-cuts. Most people who have never seen a clear-cut describe their first experience as if they had just seen an area ravaged by an atomic blast. This is going to make it difficult to market ourselves as place that preserves its natural and cultural heritage! Have you done any research on how tourism businesses are going to market the O&C corridor as a travel destination with the loss of this strategic marketing value? What

will be the net loss of this marketability and how are you proposing to assure tourism businesses will survive and grow after the WOPR destroys Oregon's strategic tourism industry marketing values?

I have read that tourism is predicted to be the number one industry in America within the next decade. How will the WOPR impact the ability of communities in the O&C corridor to expand and grow in a direction that will enable them to capture these dollars for their economy? Do you have any information to assure me and owners of tourism-based businesses that the WOPR is not going to cause a gradual decline and annihilation of tourism dependent businesses and hence the annihilation of the community's ability to capture tourism dollars?

Can you explain how the economic value we gain from logging will provide an equal or greater economic return to the communities that have lost their tourism industry? Will there be new jobs for the tourism businesses that may go out of business as a result of the WOPR?

Considering that the American dollar is weakening against other currencies around the world, have you done any research to help O&C counties understand how the WOPR might impact their ability to compete in the global tourism market and help get our money back into this country?

Tourism is a non-outsourcable resource. No one can take our tourism resources away from us and move them to another country. For that reason, I feel it is foolish to support a forest management plan that risks destroying tourism resources that could bring hundreds of millions of dollars to the O&C corridor *every year*. I am extremely concerned about the economic future of Oregon under a plan that destroys tourism for the purpose of committing our O&C lands to timber production that contributes to Oregon's economy at an agonizingly stale cycle of once every 80-100 years.

Question about impacts to quality of life marketing values

Have you done any research on the impacts the WOPR will have on the quality of life in the O&C corridor and how this might impair the ability of communities to attract business development or attract home-based entrepreneurs and service providers who create their own jobs?

I am concerned that the intense logging proposed in the WOPR is going to detract from our quality of life by making O&C lands unusable to the public and that this in turn will reduce or limit the ability of a community to expand or diversify its quality of life resources.

The loss of quality of life resources will have extended impacts. For example, if we were able to expand the number of equestrian trails on O&C lands, we might attract more people to move into the area who own horses. This will benefit local feed and tac stores and increase the opportunity of selling agricultural products such as locally grown hay.

Equestrian trails on O&C lands would increase the opportunity for attracting riding clubs or holding annual riding events, which increases tourism spending. Have you done any research on how the exclusion of quality of life from WOPR planning is going to impact significant economic opportunities for the community?

Have you done any research on the role quality of life plays in attracting business development or recruiting the development of non-timber industries in a community?

Have you created a list of potential quality of life alternatives and researched the potential economic contribution they could make to a community and estimated what will be lost if they are displaced by timber practices that minimize quality of life values? For example:

Equestrian trails: Increases property value, benefits local shops, increases tourism opportunities.

Walking trails: Walking is the number one recreation in America. Healthy lifestyles are a strong marketable attribute. Increases property value, increases tourism opportunities, increases community health.

Biking trails: Mountain biking is a popular sport with Gen X. Increased mountain biking would benefit local shops, increase tourism opportunities, and make the community a more diversified living experience which contributes to the value of property.

Wildlife habitat: Birding is the fastest growing activity in America. Forest attributes that create a diversity of bird habitats increases the opportunity for marketing the area as a place for a diversified living experience. Property value increases, opportunities for tourism marketing are enhanced.

Quality of life values: QOL values may be instrumental in attracting home-based entrepreneurs and internet-based service providers. This increases the number of jobs in the community and their income is able to purchase other services in the community such as construction, landscape maintenance, house cleaning, etc.. QOL may also play a role in attracting business and clean industry to the O&C corridor.

Unique logging practices such as the Natural Selection Alternative (Page 108 Vol one of the Draft WOPR): This proposed alternative was rejected by the BLM but should have been given more consideration because it creates a unique cultural marketing opportunity with a forest management practice that harvests timber in a way that creates recreational and tourism resources. A unique forest management practice give us powerful publicity marketing values, long term local forest jobs, increased opportunities for tourism, walking trails, equestrian trails, mountain biking trails, birding, and interpretive trails.

Does timber harvesting on O&C lands create an equal or greater economic return than these six alternative economic strategies?

Have you given any thought as to how we can use timber management to obtain wood fiber AND create quality of life values that enable each acres of O&C land to contribute to the local economy every year rather than once every 80-100 years?

Concerns about increased taxes caused by the WOPR

Please see attached document for an explanation of my concerns about increased tax liabilities that the WOPR will impose on all Oregonians.

Questions about the stagnant economic strategy of the WOPR

Have you done any research on more economically viable ways to use our O&C lands than the stagnant strategy proposed in the WOPR?

I am very concerned about how the WOPR will impact Oregon's future economy with its strategy that commits each acre of O&C land to a cycle contributing to the economy at an extremely stale rate of once every 80-100 years.

It doesn't seem to be very prudent to throw 2.2 million acres of Oregon land into such a deep pit.

Have you done any research on how we can make these lands productive every year rather than once every 80-100 years?

Conclusion

I am very alarmed that the WOPR is sending Oregon in a direction of economic stagnation, reduction of property value, increased tax liabilities, lower quality of life, impairment of our ability to recruit business and industry, and loss of tourism and tourism dependent businesses.

If you cannot answer the questions above, you should not be supporting the WOPR until you can.



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